

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT "VALEDICTORY FUNCTION OF 122nd FLOWER SHOW 2018"
AT GOVERNMENT BOTANICAL GARDEN, UDHAGAMANDALAM
ON 22.05.2018**

ANAIVARUKKUM MAALAI VANAKKAM

Thiru.R.Duraikkannu

Thiru.K.R.Arjunan

Thiru. Santhi A Ramu

Thiru.R.Rajagopal

Thiru.Gagandeep Singh Bedi

Tmt. J.Innocent Divya

Dr.N.Subbaiyan

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

It fills me with happiness to be here today at the Government Botanical Garden for the valedictory function of the 122nd Flower Show. This well known and prestigious Flower Show enjoys international recognition both in terms of its antiquity and stature. The festival flaunts the beauty of Nature through its floral exhibits and every year the horticultural displays are put up on show in the month of May.

The Show is being organized by the Government since 1980. Prior to that it was being organised every year by the Agri Horticultural Society. The first such show was held in 1896 when Mr. Tremehere was the Collector of Nilgiris district. Thereafter Nilgiris Agri-Horticultural Society did a commendable work by keeping the flag flying for nearly 85 long years by organising the Flower Show with meticulous care and attention year after year.

I am informed that to mark the Centenary Flower Festival in 1995 the Government Rose Garden was created. Today the Rose Garden is home to

nearly 4000 varieties of roses and attracts about 10 lakh visitors every year. It was also awarded the Garden of Excellence award by the World Rose Society at Osaka, Japan about 10 years back.

Apart from the Rose Garden there are a number of attractions in the Botanical Gardens such as the fern house which houses about 127 varieties of ferns, carpet bed designs of the Indian Union and the emblems of the Government of India and the Government of Tamil Nadu, the crescent shaped lily pond near which abound aquatic plant species and perennial flowers like salvia, larkspur and dahlia, the conservatory which houses colourful annuals and perennials like chrysantheum, Balsam and geranium, and the nurseries with their glass houses and a series of terraces for breeding of exotic plants.

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever. So said John Keats the famous romantic poet who lived in 19th century England. Flower shows are a treat to the eye and represent beauty at its best. The variety of colours fill our heart with joy. It is therefore no wonder that like our flower show there are other reputed shows being held in Chelsea in England and Seattle and Philadelphia in the U.S. We are indeed in august company.

Besides serving as a feast to the eye, flower shows also enhance awareness about flowers among flower growers and garden lovers. They also provide an opportunity for floral exhibitors to display their talent. On an average, every year, nearly 200 gardens vie with each other to bag the "Best Garden" title and win prizes. The competition is usually held before the flower show begins. Another highlight of the flower show is that every year around 10,000 flower pots featuring 150 varieties of flowers are put up on display by the competitors, lighting up the landscape with a riot of colour.

In addition garden competitions are also being conducted to encourage the general public to maintain beautiful gardens in their houses. About 150 to 200 well maintained gardens are being awarded with prizes every year. Besides prizes are also awarded for plant arrangements in glass houses and for bonsai collections and collections of medicinal plants.

To provide a first hand knowledge about the flowers elsewhere in the world, the organizers have imported Tulips and Disbuds for display during the flower show. More than 162 varieties of such flowers have been arranged in the flower show gallery for the benefit of the tourists.

I am happy to know from the Directorate of Horticulture that a Centre of Excellence for Cut flowers at Thally, Krishnagiri district has been setup at a project cost of Rs. 8.80 Crore in December, 2017. This centre is expected to serve the purpose of being a demonstration farm for Cut flowers to enable training of farmers in the latest technologies. With such measures, Tamil Nadu which accounts for 19% of the nation's flower production will emerge as the leader in the country in the production of flowers.

I congratulate the prize winners for having emerged successful in what must have been a very tough competition. There are nearly 650 prize winners being honoured today and this includes the distribution of 59 rolling trophies. I feel delighted on seeing the tremendous interest and enthusiasm that is being shown to participate in the Ooty flower show year after year.

This shows the enormous interest that people have in bonding with Nature. Nature is like our Mother, bountiful and generous. We should respect Nature and ensure that we leave behind for our succeeding generations more natural resources than what we inherited. Each one of us, must, in our own way contribute towards sustainability. At the Raj Bhavan I have ordered for vermi composting to be done and to avoid use of bottled mineral water for day to day use in households. This reduces the use of plastic. Similarly conserving power through proper monitoring of our lighting and heating requirements helps in reduced use of fossil fuels besides resulting in savings to the exchequer. We at Raj Bhavan have cut down our power bills by 30%.

Visitors can now come to Raj Bhavan to see for themselves the environmentally sustainable measures that are being undertaken. People from all walks of life without any distinctions whatsoever can apply online to have a tour of the Raj Bhavan in the evenings. This is available on all days of

the month. I am sure that each one of you here will find it enjoyable and educative.

I extend my best wishes to the organisers namely the Collector of Nilgiris and the Directorate of Horticulture for making this flower show a grand success.

Nandri Vanakkam.

Jai Hind.